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Maintenance of international security — good-neighbourliness, stability and development in South-Eastern Europe

Letter dated 25 May 2004 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour, on my own behalf and on behalf of the Permanent Representatives of Croatia, Mr. Vladimir Drobnjak, and of Albania, Mr. Agim Nesho, to draw your attention to the joint statement of the representatives of Croatia, Albania, the Republic of Macedonia and the United States of America on the occasion of the second meeting of the Partnership Commission (see annex).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated under agenda item 60 of the preliminary agenda of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Jon **Ivanovski**
Minister-Counselor
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the
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* A/59/50 and Corr.1.

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Annex to the letter dated 25 May 2004 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Joint statement of the representatives of Albania, Macedonia, Croatia and the United States of America on the occasion of the second meeting of the Partnership Commission

Skopje, 20 May 2004

1. We, representatives of Albania, Croatia, Macedonia and the United States, gathered today in Skopje for the second meeting of the Partnership Commission, declare:

2. The Partners marked the first anniversary of the Charter of Partnership between Albania, Croatia, Macedonia and the United States signed on May 2, 2003, in Tirana, Albania. They reviewed the progress made by the Partners towards achieving the partnership goal. They reaffirmed the common vision of a Europe whole, free and at peace.

3. The Partners saluted the recent enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The success of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia is our success. They recognized, as President Bush said on March 29, 2004 in Washington, D.C., that "the door to NATO will remain open until the whole of Europe is united in freedom and in peace."

4. Albania, Croatia and Macedonia expressed their gratitude to the U.S. for its firm support in implementing the Charter and the ongoing commitment to freedom, stability and democracy in Southeast Europe. The three countries welcomed the adoption of the Resolution 558 (30 March 2004) by the U.S. House of Representatives. Albania, Macedonia and Croatia look forward with deep appreciation to similiar resolutions that may be adopted by the parliaments of other NATO members, in particular from our neighbors.

5. The Partners reiterated that the Charter of Partnership is a strong cooperative mechanism in deepening and accelerating the democratic, political, economic and military reforms necessary to achieve the full and early integration of Southeast Europe into European and Euro-Atlantic institutions.

6. The Partners reaffirmed their support for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro, in their efforts to join the pre-accession processes of Euro-Atlantic institutions.

7. The Partners noted with satisfaction that numerous activities have been accomplished since the Charter was signed. The Partners' Joint Declaration at the first meeting of the Partnership Commission in

Washington reaffirmed their achievements, expressed their commitment toward regional cooperation and the U.S. support in the integration process of the three countries in the Euro-Atlantic structures. The three aspirant countries agreed upon rotating coordination among them and the development of the six-month Action Plan. The Action Plan contains activities in many areas in addition to the political and security consultations.

8. Among the accomplishments of the Charter's first year the Partners were the extended defence cooperation, including joint exercises, the Ohrid Conference of September 2003, with EU, NATO, governmental and civic society participation, parliamentary exchanges and cooperation among the Non Governmental Organizations, as well as bilateral and trilateral meetings of Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence Ministers, political directors and experts.

9. The Partners commended the successful implementation of the Annual National Programs of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia as part of NATO's Membership Action Plan. This is further proof of their firm commitment to promoting the rule of law, human rights, a free market economy, and modernisation of military capabilities.

10. The Partners recognized that these efforts and accomplishments foster both regional security and greater interoperability with the Alliance on the way to NATO accession of Albania, Croatia and Macedonia.

11. The Partners discussed the deepening of their military cooperation. Albania, Croatia and Macedonia reaffirmed their commitment to continue modernization of their armed forces to enable them to better address security threats, better support regional stability, and better engage in operations beyond the immediate region. Specifically, Albania, Croatia and Macedonia initiated the idea of creating a joint military medical unit for deployment in the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force mission in Afghanistan.

12. As part of their commitment towards regional security and stability and their combined efforts against international terrorism, the Partners underscored the necessity to intensify the fight against the often-intertwined transnational threats of organized crime, money laundering, and illicit trafficking of weapons, narcotics and human beings, as well as against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

13. Albania, Croatia and Macedonia expressed their strong wish that their progress on the road to NATO accession will be noted at the upcoming NATO Summit in Istanbul, and a clear message will be given that they are considered candidates to be invited for membership in the Alliance in the next round of its enlargement.